

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Guidance on Mass Gatherings March 2020

Preparing for Potential Infection in West Virginia Communities

Since February 2020, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health has been following an increase in the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the U.S. The Bureau for Public Health monitors Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updates, hospital admissions, and other data to determine the potential risk to citizens in West Virginia from the virus.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of Breath

PERSON-TO-PERSON TRANSMISSION

- Occurs via small droplets from the nose or mouth of the infected person when they cough, sneeze, or exhale.
- Maintain 2 meter (6 ft) distance between yourself and anyone coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home if you feel sick. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance.

PREVENTION

- Isolating sick and diagnosed individuals.
- Encourage proper handwashing.
- Cleaning and sanitizing surfaces.
- Provide education about COVID-19.
- Discourage sharing food, drinks, etc.
- Encourage influenza (flu) vaccination.

REVIEW EXISTING OPERATIONS PLAN

- Meet with the emergency operations coordinator or planning team at the venues.
- Establish relationships with key community partners and stakeholders.

ADDRESS KEY PREVENTION STRATEGIES IN EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

- Promote daily practice of everyday preventive actions.
- Provide COVID-19 prevention supplies at your events.
- Plan for staff absences.
- Promote messages that discourage people who are sick from attending events.
- If possible, identify a space that can be used to isolate staff or participants who become sick at the events.
- Plan ways to limit in-person contact for staff supporting your events.
- Develop flexible refund policies for participants.
- Identify actions to take if you need to postpone or cancel events.

COMMUNICATE ABOUT COVID-19

- Update and distribute timely and accurate emergency communication information.
- Identify and address potential language, cultural, and disability barriers associated with communicating COVID-19 information to event staff and participants.

PUT EMERGENCY OPERATIONS AND COMMUNICATION PLANS INTO ACTION

- Stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation.
- Communicate frequently with those in your communication chain.
- Distribute health messages about COVID-19 to event staff and participants.
- Provide COVID-19 prevention supplies to event staff and participants.
- Consider alternatives for event staff and participants who are at high risk for complications from COVID-19.
- Implement flexible staff attendance and sick-leave policies (if possible).
- Separate those who become sick at your event from those who are well.

DETERMINE NEED TO POSTPONE OR CANCEL EVENTS

- Put into action strategies for postponing or canceling your events.
- Update everyone in your communication chain about when your events will occur if postponed or canceled.

EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS AND COMMUNICATION PLANS

- Meet with the emergency operations coordinator or planning team for your venues to discuss and note lessons learned.
- Maintain and expand your planning team.
- Participate in community-wide emergency preparedness activities.

For additional information on COVID-19, please visit our webpage at: www.coronavirus.wv.gov

Questions and concerns can also be directed to the 24/7, toll-free COVID-19 information hotline at 1-800-887-4304